

# Osteopathy Proven Correct

*Scientific Research Proves Truth of Dr. A. T. Still's Original Theories.*

**L**IKE all great original thinkers, Dr. A. T. Still, founder of osteopathy, had theories for almost every disease and function of the body, and many of these theories were crude and incompetent, just because the then state of the sciences he dealt with was still crude and incompetent. In fact, when Dr. Still worked out many of his theories of disease, the real causes of these diseases were wholly unknown and seemingly incomprehensible. But of the various theories which, like sparks from a grinding wheel, flew off from his original and ever-active mind, at least two were of prime order and absolutely true and good. These were first, his theory of the mechanical (anatomical) lesion, and secondly, his theory of the chemical immunity of the body, both of which he put forth as related to the cause and cure of disease, and both of which have absolutely stood the test of time and subsequent scientific criticism and experiment.

## His Two Great Discoveries, Lesions and Immunity.

In justice to the original mind of this American genius, it should be said that Dr. Still was the first man to perceive the truth that nature has developed in the animal body its own defenses against diseases. And with this thought in mind we can for the first time see the power and real meaning in his well worn axiom, "Find it, fix it, and leave it alone!"

The three last words contain the heart of the axiom—leave it alone; because by leaving it alone, Dr. Still most certainly did not mean that the practitioner should never touch his patient again! What he did mean was that after the lesion has been corrected (after the body parts have been readjusted to their normal relationship) nature itself will do all the necessary subsequent work—that is, it is not necessary (nay, it is hurtful) to thrust into the body the drugs that, in his day, were believed by all doctors of all schools to have some effect against the disease at work in the body.

It is only just to the genius of the man to give him the credit for having been the first to conceive this theory of immunity to disease, which, during the past twenty-five years, has grown with such rapidity and strength as to fill the whole world with its noise and to change radically all views of diseases and the possibility of their cure.

Dr. Still, in effect, urged the theory that all diseases could be scientifically classified with smallpox, and similar immunizing diseases and that hence all diseases in their cause and cure could be referred back to the blood. His axiom now follows. Remove the cause which stops or clogs the blood flow, or which blocks the nerve which controls the blood flow, and the blood itself will work the cure. "The rule of the artery is supreme." For in the blood are all the elements needed by the cells for purposes of nutrition in health and disease. In disease the body cells manufacture their own medicines—their own anti-toxins—and if the body is physically free to do this then no other outside agencies are required. No medicine can assume to do what only the wonderful laboratories of the body has authority to perform, and to dictate to Nature in this respect is like telling the flowers how to paint their colors, or directing the stars in the course of their orbits.

The problem of cure, then, resolves itself into this: How to give the body physical freedom to express itself in its vital reactions to disease. It is the problem that is solved by osteopathy, for not only are the mechanical maladjustments of the body that predisposed it to the disease corrected by Osteopathic treatment, but the physical expression of disease is normalized from time to time; recovery is made rapid and easy, and pain and distress relieved. Only those who have been ill and have experienced the refreshment and at times almost miraculous relief resulting from this form of treatment can appreciate how Osteopathy gives Nature this freedom to cure.

Now when Dr. Still began to treat diseases on this principle the entire principle itself was not only amazing to the then current ideas

of disease, but was also incomprehensible even to the best thought of his time. To bring virtually all diseases under one main principle was, to the science of that day, a complete absurdity. To say that smallpox, tuberculosis, pneumonia, whooping cough, pimples on the face, leprosy, syphilis, typhoid fever, diarrhoea, a "cold" in the head, and cancer where one and all referable to the same basic law (the state of the blood) and perhaps curable by the same method, were the whole problem in all phases mastered, was not only "revolutionary" but was a wildly impossible and clearly absurd theory of disease in its causes and its cure. But let us ask, in the light of the scientific progress of the past quarter of a century just how absurd and impossible it really was.

## His Immunity Generalization Required Years to Be Understood.

It is, indeed, a corollary of Darwin's law of natural selection, for it is clear that if all living organisms had not been preserved through their ancestral immunity to disease—through this self-protecting mechanism that saved them from disaster and death by disease—they had never survived at all, the very fact of their survival being of itself indisputable evidence of the presence in their bodies of a defensive and curative force—the old *vis medicatrix naturae* (the healing force of nature) of the ancient doctors that was ever active and automatically self-adjusting under favorable conditions. To re-establish these favorable conditions, when accident had removed them, was the method proposed by Still for the cure of disease; a method absolutely original with himself, and grounded on the most conspicuous fact of human consciousness—the tendency of some forms of living matter to antagonize and destroy certain other forms of living matter, and thus to survive in the struggle for life—"disease" being mainly a struggle for life among living forms, as for example, destructive "germs" or tumor cells, on the one hand, and the normal cells of the body on the other.

It is interesting to observe, however, that of all the old drastic methods of therapy which were in full swing in his own day, only one has retained its vitality, and that is the principle of so-called "counter-irritants." Blisters and strong irritating plasters are potent in certain pains and other symptoms, although the reason why is perfectly obscure. And this principle of counter-irritants was perhaps the one prominent therapeutic method of the old time that Still did not abandon. He believed, in a limited way, in counter-irritants and used them, sometimes with excellent results, although the results were not always as sure as the cures he wrought when he stuck to his own discovery, osteopathy. His scientific errors and vagaries, however, were remarkably few when compared with the number of similar errors and vagaries of other great scientific reformers of his own day. For example, if we look into the life work of the great Johannes Mueller, founder of modern physiology, and professor of anatomy and physiology in the University of Berlin (while Still was developing his earliest dissatisfactions with medical unwisdom) we will find that perhaps not one of Mueller's wonderful "discoveries"—accepted in that day as true—has stood the test of subsequent investigation. Mueller wrote whole text-books of physiology (previously to 1850) which consisted wholly of experiments and theories all his own. And yet all that remains of the work of this great genius of science is the one theory of the "specific energy of nerves." But do we say therefore that Johannes Mueller is unworthy the monuments the world has raised to him and of the honor we do him proudly today? No, indeed. For Mueller's scientific errors and "vagaries" form the fundamental rock and cornerstone of modern physiological science, just as the most striking of Still's errors form the fundament of modern drugless therapy, with this difference that Still's theory of immunity has been absolutely demonstrated by every laboratory in Europe, and his practical application of that theory in osteopathy has given to a suffering humanity a balm unparalleled and unapproached in the history of the human race.

## Dr. Still Applied His Theories to Practical Healing.

### Osteopathic Physicians of Salt Lake

DR. ALICE HOUGHTON, 518 McIntyre Bldg.  
DR. GRACE STRATTON AIREY, 507 Scott Bldg.  
DR. MARY GAMBLE, 517 Templeton Bldg.  
DR. JOSEPH S. AMUSSEN, 416 Felt Bldg.